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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of a study that examined the impact of organizational type on management training. Two case studies compared the management training programs of a suburban school district and a Fortune 500, energy-related organization. Data were obtained from interviews with key informants, observations, and document analysis. Using Carlson's (1964) organizational typology of "wild" and "domesticated" organizations, the industrial organization was classified as wild and the school site as domesticated. The two management training programs shared a commitment to training, a growing emphasis on group development, training methods principles, and an absence of systematic evaluation of training results. They differed in their delivery and content of training, organizational structures, resources available for training, and differing trainee expectations. The similarities did not appear to be related to organizational type. Only the perceived differences of organizational structure appeared to be strongly related to organizational type. Overall, the concepts of wild and domesticated organizational types were not useful. Most of the differences seemed to transcend organizational type and could be explained by factors such as need, tradition, and efficiency. However, industry and education could share training knowledge, skills, and resources. (Contains 13 references.) (LMI)

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Inservice Administrator and Manager Training:

Comparing Education and Industry

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INSERVICE ADMINISTRATOR AND MANAGER TRAINING: COMPARING EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY

Background

In times of crisis in education, educators have sometimes looked to the business world as a model for changes in schools. Management training is one function of industry that has begun to receive interest in educational organizations. Both educational and industrial organizations depend on inservice personnel training to accomplish organizational goals. Industry has been involved in management training for many years (Porter & McKibbin, 1988), but training for administrators in schools is a relatively new development (Orlich, 1989).

School administrators have generally received the majority of their job training in preservice college certification programs. The programs have traditionally focused on the study of administration, leadership, and supervision in what Cooper and Boyd (1987) called the "One Best Model" of administrator preparation. However, principals and other administrators are now being expected to shift from a narrow view of administration as management to a broader one that incorporates new theoretical viewpoints and requires such skills as group processing, facilitating, orchestrating, and purposing (Sergiovanni, 1990), to name a few. Because the orthodoxy of the "One Best Model" does not

lend itself to meeting the changing needs of school administrators, inservice training for administrators is growing in importance.

Professional literature describes effective training programs and tells what kinds of programs are available, but there has been little research on what is happening in the actual practice of administrator training. The research project described here examined inservice administrator training in education from the perspective of its relationship with management training in industry.

The middle management function in industry bears some similarities to that of administration, particularly principals, in education. Nilsson (1987) found that "although there are some major differences between training needs in education and industry, the basic objective is the same -- to provide effective leadership to achieve strategic goals in a cost-effective manner" (p.10). He suggested that there were more similarities than differences when comparing education to business and that we "have much to learn from and share with each other (Nilsson, 1987, p. 17). Acknowledging that education and industry are two different kinds of organizations, this comparative study was done to contribute to a more complete understanding of the training phenomenon in both settings.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the management

training phenomenon in one industry and one school district to see how they compared and whether similarities and differences may or may not be explained by what is known about organizational type. It would then be possible to generalize what was learned back to a theory of organizational typology.

The examination sought to answer two main questions: (a) Was management training affected by the difference in organization type? And, (b) What were the similarities and differences between management training in the two different organizations and were they a function of organization type. Although differences were anticipated based on organization type, it was also possible that management training was not affected by the difference in organization type.

Theoretical framework

The organizational typology used as a basis for this examination was Richard O. Carlson's (1964) theory of "domesticated" and "wild" organizations. Domesticated organizations are those in which participation by clients is mandatory and the organizations cannot exercise choice in the matter of clients. Public schools are domesticated organizations. Wild organizations are those which have some control over clients they wish to deal with and which are participated in by clients on a voluntary basis. Private industries can be considered wild organizations.

The differences between these two kinds of organizations

represent the basic differences between public schools and private industry. Domesticated organizations such as public schools do not compete with other organizations for clients. A steady flow of clients is assured. They have no struggle for survival because they are protected by the society they serve. They compete for funds in a restricted area but funds are not closely tied to the quality of their performance. On the other hand, wild organizations such as for-profit industries do struggle for survival; their survival is not guaranteed. Support for them is closely tied to the quality of their performance. A steady flow of clients is not assured and they are not protected at vulnerable points as are domestic organizations (Carlson, 1964, pp. 266-7).

(It should be noted here that the recent movement toward school "choice" is a significant departure from the notion of domesticity in public schools. Schools in which clients have a choice of attendance could lean somewhat toward competition for those clients, thus making them less domestic. The public school in this study did not embrace choice. Students were required to attend certain schools and the schools had no choice over their students.)

The differences between domestic and wild organizations are evident in the way the two respond to their environments. Just as wild organisms in nature adapt quickly to their changing environment, Carlson (1964) suggested that wild organizations adapted more quickly to their environment than

do domesticated ones. Domesticated organizations are slower to change and adapt than are wild organizations.

The differences in response to environment suggested that one would expect to find differences between public schools and industries in the purposes, expectations, and function of their management training programs. To the extent that it appeared from this exploratory study that management training was largely a function of organization type, further study was indicated which would develop training models specifically for each type of organization. Where elements of the training function appeared to transcend organization type, further research needed to be aimed at finding what was effective in each field that might be of value to the other.

Significance

This study explored connections between education and industry in their management training functions. Those connections could serve as a starting point in finding what is available in each field that might be of benefit to the other. They could also serve as a starting point for further research to explore those connections in more depth.

Methodology

This investigation was naturalistic, consisting of two case studies -- one of a school district administrator training program and one of an industry management training program. The management training function at each site was

examined through semi-structured interviews, observations, and examination of relevant documents.

An interview guide, developed from the literature on effective training practices, served to focus the interviews. Although there were some general expectations regarding similarities and differences between the two types of organizations, specific hypotheses were not used.

In selecting the sites, no particular attempt was made to control for factors other than the availability of a training program for managers. One Fortune 500, energy-related industry and one suburban school district in a city of approximately 75,000 population were selected because they were not atypical of others in their class. There was no reason to believe that these sites would be substantially different from others of their approximate size. The school district was large enough to have a management training function and the industry had been involved in management training for a number of years. It was not necessary for them to be representative of the population because the study sought more to develop working hypotheses concerning relationships and comparisons between business and industry training programs than it did to generalize to a larger population.

Key informants were selected to be interviewed at each site. Interviewees in each organization included the person at the top of the training hierarchy; the person directly

responsible for the training program; one or two others involved in planning, developing, and presenting training programs; and, two or three who had recently received the training.

Data Analysis

Transcripts of the interview narratives were reviewed by the researcher and a collaborator. The two looked for patterns and themes that yielded a picture of management training in each organization, the similarities and differences between the training functions, and the extent to which the similarities and differences were a function of organization type. Then conclusions were drawn which could be considered as working hypotheses for addressing the comparison between administrator training in education and manager training in industry.

Interview Guide

Literature from the field of inservice administrator and manager training was used to determine the most relevant questions to be asked of interviewees. The interview guide followed the four-part framework provided by Charters and Jones (1974) for describing administrator inservice programs. The interview guide included questions about the (a) institutional commitment to the manager training program, (b) where it fit into the organizational structure, (c) characteristics of the actual training programs, and the (d) behaviors of the trainees or outcomes of training.

Findings

Overview of Training in the Two Organizations

In the education organization administrative training was a team responsibility of all central office administrators, with four key people constituting the main design team. No one was assigned exclusively to administrator training. Training was pervasive in all functions of the organization. Training sessions were held as part of regularly scheduled meetings, during three to five day sessions in the summer, and at other times when needed.

Training decisions were made with input from principals who were often involved in designing and presenting training sessions. Principals were expected to be able to use the group processes they were taught with their staffs and to train them in the knowledge and skills they (the principals) had gained in their training.

In the industry, training had its own department in the organization, with a definite hierarchical structure. The person at the top of the hierarchy was part of the decision-making team for the company but was not involved in the day-to-day operation of the training function. The training department had a manager, an administrator, and several instructors on different levels of the hierarchy. Training programs were designed and implemented by one or more instructors, sometimes teaming with the administrator or an outside consultant.

In the industry, the core of the training program was in management development courses. These courses were offered on a regular basis, had specific content, and were taught the same way every time. Supervisors and managers attended when it was convenient or when they were assigned to attend.

Similarities

The major similarities in management training between the two organizations were in (a) a commitment to training, (b) a growing emphasis on group development, (c) the principles on which training methods were based, and, (d) an absence of systematic evaluation of training results.

Commitment. Both organizations exhibited commitment to the training of mid-level managers. Commitment was shown by the position training held in the organizational structure, by its tie to organizational decision-making, and by the resources and time that each organization allocated to management training. In both organizations training was designed to carry out the goals of the organization.

Group development. Another area of similarity was in the movement toward group development mentioned by several respondents from schools and from industry. Each organization had training courses or sessions that were geared toward teamwork and group processes. In industry, group development was tied to the quality improvement program in which the company was attempting to decentralize control by pushing decision-making to the lowest possible level. In

the school, group development was tied to site-based management which also decentralized decision-making.

Methodology. The training methodology in both organizations was based on adult learning principles developed by Knowles (1984) and a number of others. Trainers in both settings used adult learning principles in designing and delivering training. They recognized the importance of variety and participation when planning for adults. In the education organization, participants emphasized that adult learning principles were modeled by the design team and were expected to be modeled by principals in working with their faculties.

Trainers in both organizations followed a prescribed presentation model in designing training programs. The school used a model based on the essential components of effective inservice identified by Joyce and Showers (1980), and the industry used a "detailed presentation flow" which resembled Nadler's (1982) Critical Events Model and Bowsher's (1989) course development process.

Absence of evaluation. Similarity was seen between the school and the industry in the virtual absence of a systematic effort to evaluate the knowledge and skills gained by participants in training programs, or to measure the results of training in the workplace. Both organizations were predominantly at the reaction (lowest) level of Kirkpatrick's (1983) four-level model for measuring the

results of training. (From bottom to top, the model was used to measure "reaction" to the training program; whether "learning" had taken place; whether "behavior" was changed, and whether "results" were seen in the company.) Both organizations indicated a desire to do a better job of measurement and evaluation.

Differences

Major differences found in management training between the two organizations were in (a) the method of delivering training and the content of training, (b) the organizational structures of the two organizations and the problems resulting from them, (c) the money and resources available for training, and (d) differing expectations of trainees.

Method of Delivery. The major difference between the school and the industry training programs was in their method of delivering training, as mentioned in the overview. The industry delivered training by means of courses of specific content, whereas the school held training sessions based on current needs of the district. All administrators were generally expected to attend the sessions together thereby ensuring that they were familiar with a common body of knowledge. The industry ensured that managers had a common body of knowledge by teaching the courses the same way each time, as nearly as possible.

Content. There were both similarities and differences in the content of the training programs; however, the focus

of the content provided an important difference between the two organizations. Training sessions in the school were designed to meet the needs of the district as they arose. Most dealt with some kind of skill development, such as group processes, site-based management, curriculum and instruction issues, and mandates. The management development courses in industry emphasized understanding management principles and philosophy, communicating and negotiating skills, quality improvement, and personnel. In addition to the management development courses, the industry had recently added skill development courses for front-line managers and mid-level managers to help them deal with specific, job-related problems.

The management development courses offered in industry were more knowledge-based than skill-based -- thus oriented more toward Lawrie's (1990) definition of education than training. On the other hand, training in the school emphasized skill development and thus was oriented more toward training than education. Of course, in both organizations there were elements of both training and education, particularly with the addition of the new skill-based programs in the industry.

Training hierarchy. A number of participants in both organizations were critical of the bureaucratic organizational structure of education in general. They cited it as a major reason that change and reform were slow in

education, thus affecting the training function itself. Their perception was that education often suffered from top-down control, political pressures, and external influences that affected its ability to respond to the environment, but that industry did not suffer from the bureaucratic problems of education.

However, the findings for these two organizations did not indicate that the education organization under study was highly bureaucratic or that the industry was not. The education participants reported that in the district studied, administrator training was not dominated by a hierarchical structure. Instead, it was a team effort involving several people near the top of the organization. Those who did the training also designed the training and were involved in organizational decision-making. Input from administrators at all levels made the training function responsive to needs of the district.

On the other hand, the industry had a definite hierarchical structure. Trainers themselves were not involved in organizational decision-making. Decisions concerning the direction of the organization were made at levels above the trainers. And, when industry participants were asked about the problems in the training program, they mentioned organizational kinds of problems more often than the educators did. Such problems included the hierarchical structure of the organization, managers having difficulty

abandoning the "fear" style of management, and the frustration felt when the company actions did not reflect company policy. So, although participants in both organizations perceived education as being more entrenched in bureaucracy than was industry, that did not necessarily hold true for the two organizations studied. There was a difference in the hierarchical structure of the two organizations, even if it was not the one expected.

Resources. There was also an obvious, though unquantifiable, difference in money and other resources for training in the two organizations. It was unquantifiable because of the different sizes of the organizations, but it was evident in several ways. Both committed money to training; both purchased books, materials, and videos; and both sent people to training outside the organization, although the industry did so to a greater extent. The industry had a separate training department with its own budget. In addition, the training department received money from other departments when they sent someone to training. The training department also had its own facility to which people came from remote locations. And, the industry had more resources available for training than were evident in the school district, including classrooms, computers, CD ROM, audio and video equipment and other kinds of modern technology and equipment.

Expectations of trainees. Finally, an expectation was

found in the school that had no parallel in the industry. The expectation of administrators was that they would not only receive training, but that they would be trainers as well. Administrators would train their faculties in the skills and knowledge they gained in their own training. In industry, only trainers certified to teach a course were allowed to teach it. That maintained the integrity of the course and served to assure that managers had a common body of knowledge. Those receiving training were expected to use what they learned, but there was no expectation that they in turn would train their employees.

Discussion and Conclusions

None of the similarities in the management training function in the two organizations seemed to be a function of organization type. The similarities might have been expected in most any organization, regardless of type. For example, similarity on commitment to training could be expected because the objective of training is the same in both organizations -- to help employees perform better on the job. The trend toward group development in both organizations reflected a growing trend in industry and in schools toward using teamwork and group processes in solving problems. And, although education and business had their own literature bases, the training methodology was based on similar principles. So, these similarities seemed to transcend organizational type.

Of the differences found between the two organizations, only the perceived differences in organizational structure appeared to be strongly related to organizational type. Participants' perceptions were that the bureaucratic organizational structure of schools caused them to be entrenched in the status quo, made change difficult, and slowed the organization's response to the environment. Industry, by virtue of its need to make a profit, responded more quickly to changes in the environment. The perception was that industrial organizations were not burdened by the same constraints as educational organizations. If these perceptions were the reality in the organizations studied, the differences between the school and the industry would, indeed, be a function of organizational type. As Carlson's (1967) typology suggested, domesticated organizations such as schools did not have to struggle for survival because they were protected by the society they served. Support for wild organizations such as industries was closely tied to the quality of their performance, thus forcing them to respond quickly to changes in the environment in order to survive.

However, although participants perceived education in general as being bureaucratically controlled, the education participants did not characterize their own school district that way. And, while participants perceived industry in general as being less bureaucratically controlled and quicker to respond to the environment, evidence from this industry

did not necessarily bear out those perceptions. The education participants believed that the method of administrator training in their school minimized bureaucracy in the management training function by using a team planning approach. The method, which included input from principals, facilitated a more rapid response to needs as they arose.

In the industry, although the profit motive was significant in forcing the company to adopt a new management philosophy in response to the changing environment, signs were still evident of a struggle to do so. A number of organizational difficulties were cited by the industry participants. The industry was changing in response to marketplace requirements; however, the change was not a particularly rapid one. Therefore, although the perception of participants was that education was bureaucracy-bound and industry had the ability to change rapidly, the reality in the organizations studied did not support the perception. So, for these two organizations, the difference in organizational structure appeared to be contrary to Carlson's (1967) typology of domestic versus wild.

The reasons for the differences in training delivery and content did not seem to lie in the distinction between domestic and wild organizations and the way they respond to the environment. Rather, they seemed to be a function of the needs of these particular organizations. For example, the course method was probably an efficient method of delivering

training to the large number of managers in the industry. In the school district, courses were not necessary because all the administrators could attend most training at the same time. Also, the content of the training may have evolved as a way to supplement the kinds of preservice training that administrators and managers had received. Administrators often have an education background and may need more technical inservice training while the opposite is true of managers in industry.

The difference in money and resources available for training in the two organizations seemed to be predominantly a function of availability and cultural norm within the organizations. The industry had a long tradition of management training in the organization and likely had more resources for training than the school. In the school district, funds for all purposes were limited, and the administrator training phenomenon was not a long-standing tradition.

At the same time, the differences in money and resources could also be considered a derivation of the "domestic" and "wild" organizational type because training may have been considered critical to the survival of the industry, while in education survival was assured with or without training.

To summarize, the examination of the similarities and differences in management training in the two organizations did not reveal as much tie to the idea of domestic and wild

as was expected. Most of the differences seemed to transcend organizational type and could be explained by factors such as need, tradition, and efficiency within the particular organizations studied. The strongest tie to domestic and wild was in the perceived differences in organizational structure between the two organizations. However, differences in money and resources could also be derivatives of the notion of domestic and wild.

The domestic versus wild model might still be a reasonable way to look at organizations. There was some evidence that the reason that at least the school did not fit the typology was that in the administrator training function it was, after all, not necessarily typical of most domestic organizations. It may have been an exception to the bureaucratic rule for educational organizations because it had mechanisms in place which allowed it to respond more quickly to the environment than other schools might. It was possible that other schools would exhibit more characteristics of a domestic organization than the school under study did. These conclusions concerning the function of organization type in administrator/manager training could serve as working hypotheses for researchers in ensuing comparisons of training functions between education and industry.

Lessons to be Learned from Each Other

There were positive examples of management training in

both of the settings investigated. Personnel in both organizations could benefit from sharing training knowledge and skills with each other. Industry might learn from the school the value of planned responsiveness to organizational needs which they used to overcome the obstacle of a bureaucratic structure. Teamwork and input from all levels of the organization were applied to planning responses to the changing environment. Industry might also learn from education to involve those who attend training in shared decision-making for the purpose of improving the training function. Educators could learn from industry the importance of offering training at times when administrators can concentrate on the learning situation without worrying about what is happening at school. And, educators (and those who finance education) could learn from industry the importance of money and resources to effective training.

Education and industry can learn much from each other and can share knowledge, skills, and resources with each other. People in both organizations must seek ways to build bridges between them.

Recommendations for Further Study

This exploratory study provided a beginning point in the comparison of administrator training in education with manager training in industry. Future studies might extend beyond the case study approach to a larger sample of educational and industrial organizations, attempting to get a

sense of whether there is a consistent model of training within each kind of organization or between the two kinds of organizations.

A similar study might be conducted to examine in depth the theoretical foundations, the content of the curriculum, and the instructional methods used in several schools and industries. The purpose would be to explore common ground with the expectation of developing a training model from the best of both organizations that can be used by both organizations.

Finally, it would be interesting to further study the notion of domestic versus wild organizations. Looking at a broader sample of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations might result in " domestic" versus "wild" having stronger explanatory power in organizational behavior.

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